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Sen. Brown announces legislative activity

LANSING – State Sen. Cameron S. Brown, R-Fawn River Township, has returned to session this fall having spent the summer recess drafting legislation totaling 15 bills.

Brown's legislative activity has resulted in bill introductions to promote highway safety, cut government red tape, help develop alternative energy, address the state's nursing shortage and protect private property rights.

"My staff and I spent the summer months connecting with people throughout the district," Brown said. "We spent time identifying needs and creating solutions to meet those needs."

Brown's bill introductions include a statutory fix to protect private property from being taken by government for private use. This legislation follows in the wake of a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling that would allow states to take private land for private use.

Other legislation resulting from Brown's summer brainstorming includes a bill to establish hydrogen fuel centers in major transportation corridors throughout the state by the year 2010. A companion bill would create standards and codes for the use of hydrogen, biodiesel and ethanol fuels.

"Given the recent alarm at high gasoline prices, we need to reach into the future of alternative energy and bring it into the present moment," Brown said. "There's no reason why we can't accelerate the timeline for using alternative energy to meet our daily transportation needs."

One area of personal interest that Brown has addressed is Michigan's nursing shortage. Brown's mother was a registered nurse at Sturgis Hospital for many years. Brown's nursing legislation would speed up the time it takes to credential nurses from the neighboring states of Indiana and Ohio. A related bill would establish a grant program to support sustained expansion of nursing school enrollment in Michigan.

"Given that we are going to be a half million nurses short by about 2010, Senator Brown's bills address the bottle neck issues, offer a balanced approach to reciprocity issues and are an effective way to approach our concerns," said Three Rivers Area Hospital Administrator Matt Chambers.

While a vote to repeal Michigan's motorcycle helmet law is pending in the Michigan House, Brown has introduced legislation to add an enhanced motor cycle safety awareness component to Michigan's driver's education curriculum.

"ABATE of Michigan, who has voluntarily trained over 40,000 students in the classroom since 1995, is grateful that Senator Brown has introduced this bill," said American Bikers Aiming Toward Education member Eric Eads. "We appreciate his commitment to safety. This bill will save lives."

"Term limits have forced all of us in the Legislature to work with a greater sense of thrift and urgency," Brown said. "We have a short window of time in which to act. I hope the legislation I have worked on this past summer will have an enduring impact on the quality of life for all the people of Michigan."